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### Conservation Farming with Terraces

Cooperative Extension South Dakota State University

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# *farmable* **Terraces**



Prepared jointly by  
**COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE,**  
South Dakota State University and  
**SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE,**  
U. S. Department of Agriculture





Soil erosion can be controlled by terraces, while preventing downstream pollution of lakes and rivers.

Motor graders, dozers, scrapers and elevator graders are used in the construction of terraces.



By paralleling terraces, farmability is increased with fewer point or short rows.

## Conservation Farming With Terraces

An important part of many conservation plans is terracing. Many times terracing is the only method, which will effectively control erosion while following profitable cropping patterns.

Whether it be for erosion control or moisture conservation, terraces can be adapted to fit the various requirements depending on slope, soils, farm equipment and crops. With modern terraces, designed to fit the individual needs, efficient farming operations are possible.

The ease by which terraces can be farmed is greatly increased by use of parallel terraces. These terraces have a constant distance between two terraces at all points allowing continuous farm operations from one end of the terrace to the other. Sometimes it is desired to seed the backslope of the terrace into permanent grass which is excellent for wildlife habitat.



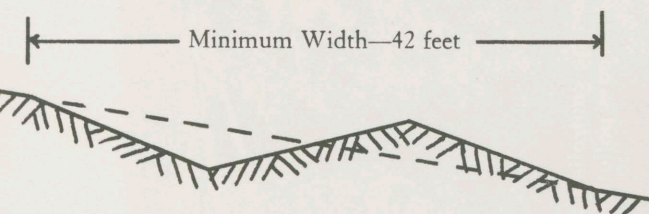
Properly designed and constructed broad base terraces are readily adapted to the large modern farm equipment.



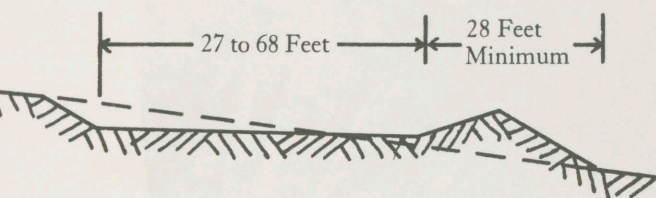
Terraces hold the water on the land making more moisture available for crop growth while preventing the erosion of the rich topsoil.



## Two Types of Terrace Cross Sections



This standard cross section may be used on all soils and land slopes. When constructed level or with no grade, it holds the run-off water on the land. If the channel is graded to an outlet such as a waterway, the water will slowly run off with no erosion occurring. This cross section is adapted for parallel terraces.



The flat channel terrace is adapted for land slopes less than 5% where soils are moderately permeable. It is constructed level to allow the run-off water to spread over a large area. This additional moisture is available for plant growth.

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Cost-share assistance is available through the Agricultural Conservation Program and the Great Plains Conservation Program. Technical services for planning, design, and construction is available through the Soil Conservation Service.

# *farmable* Terraces



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